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One further brief example possesses a certain humor.

Est praerogative le Roy d'aueir les plus excellent choses en tous species Come Lyones et Elephants qui sont beasts royall. Eagles et Ostriches. quaere de porpusses.

It will be remembered that these phrases are in Bacon's holograph and represent notes taken for his own use, either in legal work, or more probably, in accordance with his known habit, as a first draft of some treatise to be polished and finished at leisure. It is his familiar use of this language which is of interest. Without long disquisitions and innumerable comparative quotations, it is not possible to demonstrate the allegation that his Law-French possessed a firmness of structure, an elegance of form, a variety of vocabulary, a precision and exactitude of usage rare at that date. The declensions and conjugations had long since been dropped and we shall not therefore find Bacon at variance with the usage of his day, but he regards the singular and plural of the subject and verb as related one to the other; he is exact in his use of connectives, observes the common French genders, and is sparing of English words, except where they have been incorporated into the Law-French and possessed a technical meaning, or where he attempted remarks of a nature not common in law books and therefore without a recognized terminology.

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TITUS ANDRONICUS AND SHAKESPEARE

The modern public is so pitifully receptive of new theories regarding Shakespeare—as the so-called 'Baconian' and much other literature attests—that it becomes obligatory on serious students of the poet to make no frivolous use of their special opportunity. That is why I feel that Mr. H. D. Gray has almost broken trust in his recent discussion of the authorship of *Titus Andronicus* (Flügel Memorial Volume, 1916). Mr. Gray's theory is, so far as I know, and by his own statement, quite unique. He explains it at once:

'The proposal I have to submit is, that Shakespeare was the original author of the piece, and that such un-Shakespearean

passages as we find in it are due to the revision of his work by other men [*viz.*, Greene and Peele].’

It is a startling conclusion, affecting the fundamentals of the poet’s dramatic development and allowing the student, however weary in his effort to keep up with the march of Shakespearean research, no choice but to read it. It is human to feel relief at finding that Mr. Gray’s paper extends to but a dozen pages. Five thousand words are not many in which to establish so revolutionary a theory, and the inference is natural that Mr. Gray must have discovered documentary evidence of some decisive kind. No such thing, however, appears: there is nothing in the way of recorded fact that is or purports to be new. In the absence of fresh information, one is likely to expect a critical interpretation of the old, but again one is surprised. Mr. Gray’s method is ingenuous and the reverse of technical. He ignores even the amenity which prescribes that disputants in a case of doubtful authorship begin by laying the bibliographical evidence fairly before their readers. No mention is made of the early editions or notices in Henslowe and the *Stationers’ Register*, though much of this material is certainly pertinent and, it seems to me, adverse to Mr. Gray’s thesis. Instead, the author begins with a lunge that is apt to scandalize precisians in the critical game:

‘We are accustomed to think of Shakespeare as having served his apprenticeship in revising older plays. What we ought to have supposed all this time is that the Stratford youth of dramatic bent composed several original and unactable plays before ever he sought his fortune in the world; that he came to London in the hope of disposing of them; and that *his* work was handed over to the established playwrights of the time for *their* revision. . . . A moment’s reflection should convince anyone that the work of none of these men [*i. e.*, Kyd, Marlowe, Greene, and Peele] would have been handed over for revision to this unknown youth from up Stratford way. If a young man to-day wished to make his entry into the theatrical world, he would write several plays and submit them; but he would not be given the work of Pinero, Jones, Shaw, or Barrie to revise.’

This sophomoric assumption of identity between modern and sixteenth-century conditions baffles me: Mr. Gray simply cannot believe that conditions were the same or even similar. He certainly

knows that it was a regular thing for obscure writers to revise the work of the greatest, for Birde and Rowley to amplify *Doctor Faustus* and 'Bengemy Jonson' in his days of servitude to produce additions to the *Spanish Tragedy*—even later, in all human probability, for works of Shakespeare's maturity like *Macbeth* and *Timon* to be handed over to dramatic journeymen. Moreover, on the very next page, Mr. Gray belies his own assertion by unquestioning acceptance of Shakespeare's employment as reviser of *Henry VI*. If a moment's reflection should convince any one that *Titus Andronicus* (on the assumption that it was written by Kyd, Marlowe, Greene, or Peele) would not have been 'handed over for revision to this unknown youth,' why does not the same reflection forbid Mr. Gray to assume that *Henry VI* (ascribed to one or more of the same writers) was so handed over? Yet he says: 'Shakespeare's claim to very extended passages in this [*ex hypothesi*, as reviser; see Mr. Gray's context] is of course undoubted.'

Mr. Gray proceeds to remark that 'The external evidence in favor of Shakespeare's authorship is overwhelming.' Ignoring all the external evidence except that of the Folio editors and of Meres, he continues his method of proof by pure assertion. Heminge and Condell printed the play, and 'these friends and "fellows" of his knew whether or not Shakespeare was the author.' Meres, who gives *Titus* as one of Shakespeare's plays in 1598 'was an educated man addressing an enlightened audience; he had his facts well in hand—he even knew of the private circulation of the Sonnets [Q. E. D.].' Of course, the evidence of the Folio editors and of Meres is very important on the general question of Shakespeare's concern in the play, but how does it prove Mr. Gray's peculiar contention that Shakespeare was the original author? Mr. Gray is fain to admit that the inclusion of the work in the First Folio 'implies only that the play was largely Shakespeare's,' but he affects to think the Meres mention more pertinent. 'The reason why Meres did not include either *Henry VI* or *The Taming of the Shrew* was, I firmly believe, that he knew (and many of his readers would know) that Shakespeare was only the reviser of these plays. If my contention as to *Titus* is right, then Meres' record is clear; he included every play of which Shakespeare was the original author, and, appropriately, none which he had only revised.' Mr. Gray invites us first to accept on the basis of his 'firm belief' (not further developed) a highly conjectural theory of Meres's motives,

and then offers us the clearing of Meres's record as a reward for adopting a new notion concerning the authorship of *Titus* which is in harmony with his conjectural theory. This is distressingly fallacious in itself, and leads at once to a further difficulty which Mr. Gray appears to have overlooked. Suppose we grant—as I think few readers of the *Palladis Tamia* will wish to do—that Meres was so perfectly informed and so admirably logical in excluding plays that Shakespeare revised, what shall we do with *King John*, which immediately precedes *Titus* in his list? Shall we not be obliged by simple analogy to conclude that Shakespeare wrote the original *Troublesome Reign* and Green, Peele & Co. the revised work?

I shall not follow Mr. Gray in his arraignment of various current theories on the authorship of *Titus Andronicus*, to which he next turns and to which he devotes over half of his article. Much of it does very well, but none of it advances his own idea. I cannot indeed find in his paper any effort after the second page to come to grips with the argument he is championing; namely, that Shakespeare was the original author, not the reviser, of the play. Only once again does he really venture into the open—when he seeks to show that the proportion of double-endings in *Titus* (estimated at 7%) proves its Shakespearean authorship. He is here headed toward a *non-sequitur*, since successful identification of Shakespeare's style in *Titus* would prove Shakespeare originally responsible for the plot and structure (as Mr. Gray thinks) precisely as little as the undoubtedly Shakespearean style of *King John* establishes his claim to the original plot and structure of that work. However, it would be highly important if Shakespeare could be shown by the double endings to have had any large concern in *Titus Andronicus*, whether as reviser or otherwise; but Mr. Gray's use of statistics fills me with incredulity. His argument is that Shakespeare must have written the play because neither Greene, Peele, nor Marlowe could have written a drama with seven per cent. of double endings. Rather than quarrel with this despotic subjection of Elizabethan drama to an absolute quadrumvirate, let us look at his mode of eliminating the three undesirable candidates. I have not had the spirit to check up Mr. Gray's percentages for Greene and Peele, beyond counting fourteen double-endings in the first act of *The Battle of Alcazar* (which verifies Robertson's figure of nearly 6%), where Mr. Gray asserts there are but four. It is Mr. Gray's

unqualified statement about Marlowe which most outrages me: 'Marlowe *never* employs the double ending as frequently as Shakespeare *always* employs it.' This, I am sure, can be disproved by comparing much of Shakespeare's early work, whether act, scene, or entire play, with *Edward II*, which has seventeen indubitable double-endings in the last three hundred lines and nine in the 120 lines of the king's death-scene (seven and a half per cent). Mr. Gray's own figures are four per cent. for *King John*, five for *Love's Labor's Lost*, six for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and three and eight-tenths for *Edward II*. I think Mr. Gray is not ignorant that the percentage in Marlowe's *Lucan* is about sixteen and in his portion of *Hero and Leander* about ten. Whether his very low proportion of double-endings for the entire play of *Edward II* can be justified on any fair basis of calculation I have not freshly investigated. I do not think so, since it varies decidedly from my own count, which does not differ from the rules that Mr. Gray states. Nor am I in any way desirous of establishing the possibility of Marlowe's authorship of *Titus Andronicus*. But is it not strange that a scholar should be willing to rest a categorical denial of the possibility solely upon the asserted presence in the play of a percentage of double-endings which Marlowe unquestionably equaled in some of his most characteristic scenes, which he more than doubled in blank verse narrative, and exceeded by half in riming couplets?

In a year or little over it has been my task to read papers by Mr. Gray on *Titus Andronicus*, on Falstaff, on *Hamlet*, on the first part of *Henry VI*, and on *Love's Labour's Lost*. Ill considered 'snap-judgment' and logical inconsequence are not observable to the same degree in all, but if a strong family resemblance did not seem to exist, this protest would hardly be registered. Shakespearean research is now pretty soundly established in America. Half a dozen scholars to whom the present writer doffs his cap are with cautious laboriousness stalking the elusive game which escaped such ardent hunters as Malone, Halliwell, and Furnivall. Is it invidious for those who follow in the chase to raise a cry of deprecation, when it looks as if the whole range might be disturbed by random pot-shots?

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